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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm
MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

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KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

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The Supreme Court will hear arguments over Tennessee's ban on gender-affirming care for minors

By MARK SHERMAN and GEOFF MULVIHILL

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Advocates for transgender rights are turning to a conservative-dominated Supreme Court after a presidential election in which Donald Trump and his allies promised to roll back protections for transgender people.

The justices on Wednesday are taking up the issue of gender-affirming care for transgender minors, which has been banned by Tennessee and 25 other Republican-led states.

The fight over whether transgender adolescents can access puberty blockers and hormonal treatments is part of a broader effort to regulate the lives of transgender people, including which sports competitions they can join and which bathrooms they can use.

Trump backed a national ban on such care as part of his 2024 campaign in which he demeaned and mocked transgender people.

In its waning days, the Biden administration, along with families of transgender adolescents, will appeal to the justices to strike down the Tennessee ban as unlawful sex discrimination and protect the constitutional rights of vulnerable Americans.

"The stakes are high, of course, for transgender adolescents, but also for the parents who are watching their children suffer, who are just trying to do right by their kids," Chase Strangio, who represents the families at the Supreme Court, said in an interview. Strangio, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union, will be the first openly transgender person to argue before the high court.

A lawyer for Tennessee will argue that the "life-altering gender-transition procedures" are risky and unproven and that it's the state's role to protect children.

Trump nominated three justices in his first term who



Advocates gather for a rally at the state Capitol complex in Nashville, Tenn., to oppose a series of bills that target the LGBTQ community, Feb. 14, 2023.

Associated Press.

pushed the court in a more conservative direction that included the decision in 2022 overturning the landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling, which had protected abortion rights for nearly 50 years.

Yet one of Trump's appointees, Justice Neil Gorsuch, also authored a ruling in 2020 that protected LGBTQ people from discrimination in the workplace under federal civil rights law.

The administration and transgender families both rely on that decision to bolster their arguments.

After Trump takes office on Jan. 20, 2025, it's possible the new administration could weigh in on the case, which is not expected to be decided until the spring. There are about 300,000 people between age 13 and 17, and 1.3 million adults who identify as transgender in the United States, according to the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law. The Williams Institute is a think tank that researches sexual orientation and gender identity demographics to inform laws and

public policy decisions.

Most Republican-controlled states have adopted a ban similar to the one in Tennessee, and those laws mostly are in effect, despite legal challenges. The Tennessee case is the first time the nation's top court will consider the constitutionality of the bans. Sivan Kotler-Berkowitz, a 20-year-old college student in Massachusetts who is transgender, said his life would have been very different if he were just a few years younger and living in one of the states.

"These bans are denying people the opportunity to live and excel," he said in an interview. "There are thousands of transgender youth across the country that are thriving just like me because we've had the love and understanding of our families and because we've had access to proper care."

The bans in Tennessee and elsewhere have put families in the position of deciding whether to travel for ongoing health care, go without or wait until their

children turn 18.

Erin Friday, a leader of Our Duty, an international group that supports the bans on gender-affirming care for minors, said the case is going to be as important as *Roe v. Wade*. She said upholding the Tennessee law would bolster the cases for the laws restricting sports participation and bathroom use.

Among the arguments advanced by defenders of the state laws is that many children who initially say they are transgender eventually change their mind. Friday said her daughter was 11 when she said she was transgender, which Friday attributed to the child having been "indoctrinated" at school. But after receiving psychiatric treatment, her daughter changed her mind, Friday said. If laws like Tennessee's are struck down, "more children would be irreversibly harmed and live a life of deep regret," Friday said in a Supreme Court filing.

Guidelines from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health that

were revised in 2022 say evidence of regret about transitioning is scant but also that patients should be told about the possibility during psychological counseling.

Some doctors who work with transgender minors said a state should not come between doctors, their patients and parents. "From a medical standpoint, I think it's really frightening and dangerous to think that legislators could pass a law that basically judges or controls what people could do with a medication based on a diagnosis," Dr. Susan Lacy of Memphis, Tennessee, who joined with the families in suing the state, said in an interview.

Michelle Quist Ryder, CEO of the American Psychological Foundation, said the laws, if left in place, are damaging for the physical and mental health of transgender people and their supporters. Gender dysphoria — the unease a person may have when their assigned sex and gender identity don't match — has been linked to depression and suicidal thoughts.

"The more we lessen the sense of safety in this community, trans youth will look out and say, 'Who else is going to come after me?'" she said.

There are prominent names in some of the 83 briefs, an unusually high number, filed on both sides of the case. Actors Elliot Page and Nicole Maines, and Sarah McBride of Delaware, who in November became the first openly transgender person to win election to Congress, have joined more than five dozen people in urging the court to strike down the Tennessee law.

Tennis legend Martina Navratilova and Olympic swimming gold medalists Donna de Varona and Summer Sanders are among 135 athletes, coaches, officials and parents who want the justices to uphold the ban on gender-affirming care for transgender minors. □

Trump promised federal recognition for the Lumbee Tribe. Will he follow through?

By GRAHAM LEE BREWER

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)

— When Kamala Harris and Donald Trump campaigned in North Carolina, both candidates courted a state-recognized tribe there whose 55,000 members could have helped tip the swing state.

Trump in September promised that he would sign legislation to grant federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe, a distinction that would unlock access to federal funds. He ultimately won North Carolina by more than 3 percentage points, in part due to continued support from Lumbee voters.

Now, as Trump prepares to return to the White House in January, the promise will be put to the test. He has Republican allies in Congress on the issue, and now the Lumbee, as well as tribal nations across the country, are watching closely to see what comes next.

Tribal nations typically receive federal recognition through an application with the Department of the Interior, but the Lumbee have been trying for many years to circumvent that process by going through Congress. Chairman John Lowery called Interior's application process "flawed" and overly lengthy and said it should be up to Congress to right what he calls a historic wrong.

"It's just crazy that we're sitting here fighting this battle, and I have to tell you that I am real in 2024," Lowery said.

Following the presidential election, the Lumbee hope there will be momentum behind their cause, but they face deep-rooted opposition from tribal nations across the country.

There are questions about Trump's next move

Several tribes, including the only one that is federally recognized in North Carolina, argue that if the Lumbee Tribe wants federal acknowledgment, it should go through the formal process in the Department of the Interior. One person fa-



Donald Trump Jr., former Democratic Rep. Tulsi Gabbard and Sen. Markwayne Mullin, R-Okla., speak during a campaign event in support of Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump, Oct. 18, 2024, in Red Springs, N.C.

Associated Press.

miliar with Trump's thinking said the president-elect will require the Lumbee Tribe to do just that, and he won't sign a Lumbee recognition bill. The person requested anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly speak about Trump's views.

Trump's spokeswoman, Karoline Leavitt, said "no policy should be deemed official unless it comes directly from President Trump."

Federal recognition is of enormous importance, as it comes with access to resources like healthcare through Indian Health Services and the ability to create a land base such as reservations through the land-to-trust process. But before that happens, a tribal nation has to file a successful application with the Office of Federal Acknowledgment, a department within the Interior.

The Lumbee Tribe has applied for federal recognition, but that petition was denied in 1985 because it "could not establish the group's descendancy either culturally, politically, or genealogically from any tribe which existed historically in the area."

In 2016, the Interior reversed a decision barring the Lumbee Tribe from reapplying,

but the Lumbee have opted for the congressional route.

Gaining federal recognition through legislation is a rare but not unheard of path. But the Lumbee's approach has stoked a simmering debate in both Indian Country and Congress about Indigenous identity and tribal nationhood.

The Lumbee have received support from members of both parties

Members of Congress from both parties have supported recognizing the Lumbee through legislation, including Oklahoma Republican Sen. Markwayne Mullin, a member of the Cherokee Nation who campaigned for Trump in North Carolina and backed the legislation. But perhaps the state-recognized tribe's most ardent ally in Congress is North Carolina Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, who is up for reelection in 2026.

Tillis introduced the Lumbee Fairness Act last year and has been a vocal supporter of the Lumbee. In interviews with The Associated Press, several tribal leaders, lobbyists, and advocates said they were told by Tillis directly or by his staff that the senator is currently and will continue to block certain bills backed by tribal

nations unless the leaders of those tribes support the Lumbee.

One of the bills he's promised to block, according to those interviewed by the AP, is a land transfer that would allow the Tennessee Valley Authority to return 70 acres of land to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the only federally recognized tribal nation in Tillis's state. It would allow the tribe to put the land in Monroe County, Tennessee into trust. The plot is part of the tribal nation's homelands and contains the birthplace of Sequoyah.

"It's appalling to me. It's disgraceful," Principal Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Michell Hicks said. He said that Tillis told him earlier this year that he would stop any legislation dealing with the Eastern Band unless Hicks pledged his support.

Hicks is among the tribal leaders who question the validity of the Lumbee's historical claims, and he said that is out of the question. At one point about a century ago, the Lumbee were known as the Cherokee Indians of Robeson County, and for many years now all three Cherokee tribes — the Eastern Band, the Cherokee Nation, and the

United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians — have denounced this and been vocal opponents of granting the Lumbee federal recognition.

Representatives for Tillis declined to comment.

Tillis held up legislation last week that would have allowed for the preservation of the site of the Wounded Knee massacre. While doing so, he singled out the heads of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, who have backed the preservation measure, for not supporting his efforts to federally recognize the Lumbee.

"This is not about you," Tillis said to the two tribal nations, who he acknowledged had been trying for a century to preserve the site of the massacre. "But you need to know that your leadership is playing a game that will ultimately force me to take a position."

Tillis suggested it was a "casino cartel" in part driven by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and an Osage attorney named Wilson Pipestem working for the tribe, that is trying to keep the Lumbee from gaining recognition, which could one day lead to the Lumbee opening their own casinos. Tillis threatened to continue publicly naming tribal leaders and their employees who he felt were standing in the way of his bill.

In a statement to the AP, Pipestem said Tillis should "apologize to the Tribal leaders for his false allegations and unscrupulous tactics."

Lowery acknowledged that Tillis has held up both pieces of legislation, but he said that Tillis has not done so at the direction of the Lumbee.

"If he's put a hold on the bill it's because he reached out to tribal leaders to see where they stand on his bill, and they apparently have told him that they're not in support," Lowery said. "So, he said 'well, if you can't be supportive of my bill, I can't be supportive of your bill.'" □

Stripped of citizenship, these Nicaraguans live in limbo scattered across the world

By MEGAN JANETSKY and SONIA PERÉZ D.

Associated Press

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) —

Sergio Mena's life dissolved in hours.

After years resisting President Daniel Ortega, the rural activist fled Nicaragua in 2018, joining thousands of protesters fleeing a yearslong crackdown on dissent.

Mena returned from exile in neighboring Costa Rica in 2021 to continue protesting, only to be thrown in a prison where he said jailers hung prisoners by their feet and shocked them with electricity.

"We were tortured all the time, physically and psychologically, from the moment we arrived until the very last day," said Mena, 40.

Now in exile in Guatemala, Mena may be out of prison but he's far from free. Upon their release, he and hundreds of religious leaders, students, activists, dissidents and journalists were rendered "stateless" — stripped of their citizenship, homes and government pensions. The United Nations says that they're among 4.4 million stateless people worldwide who struggle to find jobs, education and health-care or even open bank accounts or marry without valid ID documents.

"Statelessness is torture," said Karina Ambartsoumian-Clough executive director of United Stateless, a U.S.-based organization advocating for the stateless. "You just legally cease to exist, even if you're here physically as a human."

Free but unfree

In September, Ortega's government loaded Mena and 134 other prisoners onto the flight that took them to Guatemala. They joined 317 others whom the government has deemed adversaries who no longer deserve legal Nicaraguan identities.

The Associated Press spoke to more than 24 Nicaraguan exiles who have been stripped of their citizenship and are trying to chart paths forward. They're



Exiled Pedro Gutierrez, who was released from a Nicaraguan jail and rendered "stateless" waits for the start of a religious service, in Guatemala City, Sept. 22, 2024.

scattered across the United States, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Mexico and Spain in limbo as they struggle to recover from physical and psychological trauma, extending the torture many suffered in Nicaragua.

The Ortega government did not respond to a request for comment by the AP.

The agony of statelessness The majority of stateless people worldwide are born to refugees and migrants in countries that don't offer birthright citizenship, the right to become a citizen if you're born within a country's territory.

Many Nicaraguans struggle to scrape together enough money to feed themselves. Others hide away in fear that the Nicaraguan government will someday come for them. Many more reel from watching their lives go up in smoke. For those stranded in the U.S. or seeking respite there, President-elect Donald Trump's promises to crack down on immigration and asylum have added more uncertainty.

Intensifying repression

Ortega's government began stripping people of their citizenship early last year.

It was in that crackdown that Mena, the member of a rural activist movement, said he was imprisoned. The government claimed that he had participated in drug trafficking and organized crime, which he

denies.

In February 2023, the government broke international law when it began sending prisoners to the U.S and most recently to Guatemala. Others in exile were stripped of their citizenship without ever having been jailed.

Torment beyond borders The Nicaraguan government has not explained why it released Mena and other people from prison, although experts have speculated about the desire to duck international criticism and the costs involved while continuing to maintain a grip on enemies. Mena lives in a hotel in Guatemala City, where he flips through photos of a crumbling jail, scraps of food and his bruised, beaten body — indelible memories of more than two years in prison. His life is painted by constant fear.

"The tentacles of (the Nicaraguan government) still reach here," he said with tears in his eyes.

The Biden administration has offered the Nicaraguans temporary protections and Mena hopes the U.S. government will grant him asylum, but such protections are likely to vanish or be severely restricted under Trump. The Spanish government has offered to provide nationality to some of the stateless exiles, but few have the resources needed to build a new life in Spain, or are confused about the process.

Stateless struggle

Allan Bermudez, 54, was a university professor in Nicaragua. He was imprisoned after accusations that he was conspiring against the government as Ortega identified universities as hotbeds for antigovernment protests.

In February 2023, he was among 222 prisoners loaded onto a flight to the United States with no idea where they were going. While the U.S. government provided Bermudez and others with temporary support, a few days at a hotel, a new phone, \$400 and limited access to aid from a group of NGOs, help has since dried up.

Today, Bermudez, who has multiple advanced degrees, works at a Dunkin' Donuts on the fringes of Salisbury, Maryland, struggling to pick up hours.

He rents a small room, suffers from chronic heart problems and post-traumatic stress disorder, and has no medical care.

"I haven't bought my medicine, because if I do, I'll have nothing to eat," he said.

Back in Nicaragua, his mother had stroke this year. He's struggled to send money home. With his daughter and wife also back home, he's plagued with anxiety and depression.

He applied for asylum in February after living in the U.S. under humanitarian parole offered by the Biden administration, but said he

hasn't heard back. He's put all his hopes into building a life in the U.S. and doesn't know what he'll do if asylum doesn't come through. "I can't leave, I have my hands tied," he said. "All I can do is pray that God helps me."

Lives upended

Like Bermudez, hundreds of thousands have fled Nicaragua. Thousands of civil society organizations have been shuttered, their assets seized as the government seeks to silence any dissent. While many of the Nicaraguan exiles hope to one day return to their country, 82-year-old Moises Hassan has given up hope as he hides away in a town in the mountains of Costa Rica.

Hassan was once a guerrilla fighter against the Anastasio Somoza dictatorship and then, alongside Ortega, a member of the junta that succeeded it. He built a family and a home with thousands of books, and planned to live out the rest of his days there.

He was elected mayor of the capital, Managua, but saw his life and hopes sour when he began to criticize Ortega's anti-democratic moves. He fled the country in 2021. While on a trip to visit his daughter he heard the government was detaining critics, and knew they would come for him.

It was no surprise when his name appeared on a list of people who were stripped of their citizenship and home and called traitors.

"The message is ... 'Don't think that just because you're out of the country that you're out of our reach,'" he said.

But he said that with his pension seized along with his belongings, it has been a shock to depend on money from his children.

He and his wife remain in their corner of Costa Rica, too scared to even go to the capital, where they worry Ortega's agents could track them down.

"I feel like I'm under house arrest," he said, cradling his worn, now useless Nicaraguan passport. "I'm a prisoner in my own home." □

Iran to begin enriching uranium with thousands of advanced centrifuges, UN watchdog says

By JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran will begin enriching uranium with thousands of advanced centrifuges at its two main nuclear facilities at Fordo and Natanz, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog said Friday, further raising tensions over Tehran's program as it enriches at near weapons-grade levels.

The notice from the International Atomic Energy Agency only mentioned Iran enriching uranium with new centrifuges to 5% purity, far lower than the 60% it currently does, likely signaling that it still wants to negotiate with the West and the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump. However, it remains unclear how Trump will approach Iran once he enters office, particularly as it continues to threaten to attack Israel amid its war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip and just after a ceasefire started in its campaign in Lebanon.

Trump withdrew America from the accord in 2018, setting in motion a series of attacks and incidents across the wider Mideast. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond



This photo released on Nov. 5, 2019, by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran shows centrifuge machines in the Natanz uranium enrichment facility in central Iran.

to a request for comment over the IAEA's report. Tehran had threatened to rapidly advance its program after the Board of Governors at the IAEA condemned Iran at a meeting in November for failing to cooperate fully with the agency. In a statement, the IAEA outlined the plans Iran informed it of, which include feeding uranium into some 45 cascades of its advanced IR-2M, IR-4 and IR-6 centrifuges.

Cascades are a group of

centrifuges that spin uranium gas together to more quickly enrich the uranium. Each of these advanced classes of centrifuges enrich uranium faster than Iran's baseline IR-1 centrifuges, which have been the workhorse of the country's atomic program.

The IAEA did not elaborate on how many machines would be in each cascade but Iran has put around 160 centrifuges into a single cascade in the past.

It's unclear if Iran has begun

feeding the uranium yet into the centrifuges. Tehran so far has been vague about its plans. But starting the enrichment at 5% gives Tehran both leverage at negotiations with the West and another way to dial up the pressure if they don't like what they hear. Weapons-grade levels of enrichment are around 90%.

Since the collapse of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers following the U.S.' unilateral withdrawal from the accord in 2018,

it has pursued nuclear enrichment just below weapons-grade levels. U.S. intelligence agencies and others assess that Iran has yet to begin a weapons program.

The U.S. State Department said in a statement to The Associated Press it was "deeply concerned with Iran's announcement that it is choosing the path of continued escalation as opposed to cooperation with the IAEA."

"Iran's continued production and accumulation of uranium enriched up to 60% has no credible civilian justification," it added.

Iran, as a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, has pledged to allow the IAEA to visit its atomic sites to ensure its program is peaceful. Tehran also had agreed to additional oversight from the IAEA as part of the 2015 nuclear deal, which saw sanctions lifted in exchange for drastically limiting its program.

However, for years Iran has curtailed inspectors' access to sites while also not fully answering questions about other sites where nuclear material has been found in the past after the deal's collapse. □

Associated Press.

Death toll in Uganda landslides rises to 20 as search for more casualties presses on

By RISDEL KASASIRA

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — More bodies buried under the mud were retrieved in eastern Uganda on Friday and an injured person died in a hospital, bringing the death toll from this week's landslides to 20, officials said as search efforts pressed on in the stricken area.

Heavy rains had triggered the landslides that engulfed six villages in the mountainous district of Bulambuli, 280 kilometers (175 miles) east of Kampala, Uganda's capital, on Wednesday night. Some 125 houses were destroyed.

The Uganda Red Cross Society spokesperson Irene Kasiita told reporters that bodies of four more people were found on Friday while a fifth person, one of the injured in the landslides, died at Mbale Hospital.

The society in a statement said 750 people had been displaced, with 216 of those living temporarily at a neighboring school while others were being housed by relatives.

The Bulambuli Resident District Commissioner Faheera Mpalanyi said soldiers have been deployed to help with the digging.

"More bodies are still buried under the heaps of soils

and stones and we are trying as much as we can to recover them," she said.

Local officials told a journalist in the area on Thursday that an excavator would be brought to assist in the rescue efforts, but the roads were covered in mud and rain was still falling. The impacted area is about 50 acres with homesteads and farmlands spread downhill.

Lawmaker Irene Muloni from the Bulambuli district said Thursday the government would help relocate residents from the landslide-prone area.

"Waterfalls are everywhere, and the rainfall is

excessive," she said, urging everyone who had lost their home to seek refuge

with relatives and "leave this dangerous place." □



Rescue workers and people search for bodies after landslides following heavy rains buried 40 homes in the mountainous district of Bulambuli, eastern Uganda, Thursday, Nov. 28, 2024.

Associated Press.

Israelis are wary of returning to the north because they don't trust the ceasefire with Hezbollah

By JULIA FRANKEL

Associated Press

KIBBUTZ MALKIYA, Israel (AP) — Dean Sweetland

casts his gaze over a forlorn street in the Israeli community of Kibbutz Malkiya. Perched on a hill overlooking the border with Lebanon, the town stands mostly empty after being abandoned a year ago.

The daycare is closed. The homes are unkempt. Parts of the landscape are ashen from fires sparked by fallen Hezbollah rockets. Even after a tenuous Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire designed to let Israelis return to the north, the mood here is far from celebratory.

"The ceasefire is rubbish," said Sweetland, a gardener and member of the kibbutz's civilian security squad. "Do you expect me to ring around my friends and say, 'All the families should come home?' No." Across the border, Lebanese civilians have jammed roads in a rush to return to homes in the country's south, but most residents of northern Israel have met the ceasefire with suspicion and apprehension. "Hezbollah could still come back to the border, and who will protect us when they do?" Sweetland asked.

Israel's government seeks to bring the northern reaches of the country back to life, particularly the line of communities directly abutting Lebanon that have played a major role in staking out Israel's border.

But the fear of Hezbollah, a lack of trust in United Nations peacekeeping forces charged with upholding the ceasefire, deep anger at the government and some Israelis' desire to keep rebuilding their lives elsewhere are keeping many from returning immediately. When the truce took effect, about 45,000 Israelis had evacuated from the north. They fled their homes after Hezbollah began firing across the border on Oct. 8, 2023, in solidarity with its ally Hamas in Gaza. That triggered more than a year of cross-border exchanges,



Smoke rise next to damaged buildings on an area of a village in southern Lebanon, as seen from the Kibbutz Manara, northern Israel, Thursday, Nov. 28, 2024.

with Lebanese villages in the south and Israeli communities facing the border taking the brunt of the pain. During the truce's initial 60-day phase, Hezbollah is supposed to remove its armed presence from a broad band of southern Lebanon where the military says the militant group had been digging in for years by gathering weapons and setting up rocket launch sites and other infrastructure. Under the ceasefire, a U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL and a beefed-up Lebanese army presence are supposed to ensure Hezbollah doesn't return.

Many residents of northern Israel are skeptical that the peace will hold.

Sarah Gould, who evacuated Kibbutz Malkiya at the start of the war with her three kids, said Hezbollah fired on the community up to and just past the minute when the ceasefire took effect early Wednesday.

"So for the government to tell me that Hezbollah is neutralized," she said, "it's a perfect lie."

Residents fear for their safety in the far north. In Gaza, where Israel is pushing forward with a war that has killed over 44,000 Palestinians, Israel's goal is the eradication of Hamas.

But in Lebanon, Israel's aims were limited to pushing Hezbollah away from the border so northern residents could return home.

Israeli critics say the government should have kept fighting to outright cripple Hezbollah or to clear out the border area, which is home to hundreds of thousands of Lebanese.

"I won't even begin to consider going home until I know there's a dead zone for kilometers across the border," the 46-year-old Gould said.

Some wary Israelis trickled back home Thursday and Friday to areas farther from the border. But communities like Kibbutz Manara, set on a tiny slice of land between Lebanon and Syria, remained ghost towns.

Orna Weinberg, 58, who was born and raised in Manara, said it was too early to tell whether the ceasefire would protect the community.

Perched above all the other border villages, Manara was uniquely vulnerable to Hezbollah fire throughout the war. Three-quarters of its structures were damaged.

In the kibbutz's communal kitchen and dining hall, ceiling beams have collapsed. The uprooted floorboards are covered with ash from

fires that also claimed much of the kibbutz's cropland. Rocket fragments abound. The torso of a mannequin, a decoy dressed in army green, lies on the ground. Weinberg tried to stay in Manara during the war, but after anti-tank shrapnel damaged her home, soldiers told her to leave. On Thursday, she walked along her street, which looks out directly over a UNIFIL position separating the kibbutz from a line of Lebanese villages that have been decimated by Israeli bombardment and demolitions. Weinberg said UNIFIL hadn't prevented Hezbollah's build-up in the past, "so why would they be able to now?"

"A ceasefire here just gives Hezbollah a chance to rebuild their power and come back to places that they were driven out of," she said.

The truce seemed fragile. Associated Press reporters heard sporadic bursts of gunfire, likely Israeli troops firing at Lebanese attempting to enter the towns. Israel's military says it is temporarily preventing Lebanese civilians from returning home to a line of towns closest to the border, until the Lebanese military can deploy there in force.

Even in less battered com-

munities, no one returns home

Though the atmosphere along the border was tense, Malkiya showed signs of peace. With Hezbollah's rockets stopped, some residents returned briefly to the kibbutz to peer around cautiously.

At a vista overlooking the border, where the hulking wreckage of Lebanese villages could be made out, a group of around 30 soldiers gathered. Just days ago, they would have made easy targets for Hezbollah fire.

Malkiya has sustained less damage than Manara. Still, residents said they would not return immediately. During a year of displacement, many have restarted their lives elsewhere, and the idea of going back to a front-line town on the border is daunting.

In Lebanon, where Israeli bombardment and ground assaults drove some 1.2 million people from their homes, some of the displaced crowded into schools-turned-shelters or slept in the streets.

In Israel, the government paid for hotels for evacuees and helped accommodate children in new schools. Gould predicted residents would return to the kibbutz only when government subsidies for their lodging dried up "not because they want to, but because they feel like they can't afford an alternative."

"It's not just a security issue," Gould said. "We've spent more than a year rebuilding our lives wherever we landed.

It's a question of having to gather that up and move back somewhere else, somewhere that's technically our old house but not a home. Nothing feels the same."

It's unclear if schools in the border communities will have enough students to reopen, Gould said, and her children are already enrolled elsewhere. She's enjoyed living farther from the border, away from an open war zone. □

Adriaan Laclé

One of Aruba's richest men in the twentieth century

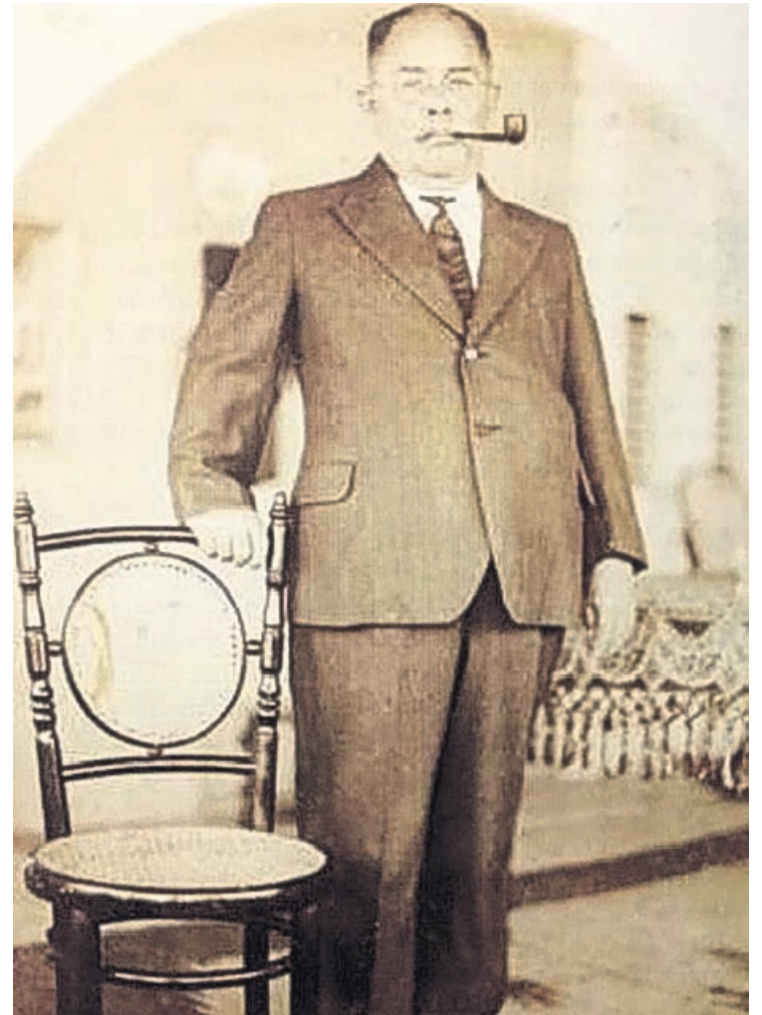
(Oranjestad)—The name Adriaan Laclé may ring a bell to locals as one of the bigger roads on the island, but about a century ago, Adriaan Laclé was a rich businessman, well-known for his generosity, wealth, and taste.

Adriaan was born in 1866 and was the eldest of six children. Not much is known about his childhood upbringing or any of his

earlier business ordeals, but during his hay day he often helped people get loans, was a well-established trader, and owned several plots of land. In fact, he commissioned the construction of the famous La Quinta Carmen manor—now a restaurant. Though he himself never lived in the beautiful manor, his own house also reflected his success and good taste. Today his house still stands

in good condition and can be found in the back streets of main street Oranjestad.

Regarding his personal life, it has been said that he was married twice during his lifetime. He had his first daughter during his first marriage but lost his wife soon after her birth. During his second marriage, he fathered 16 children. However, it has been said that only 11 of those 17 made



it past 18 years of age. Perhaps two of his most well-known daughters are Maria Monica Laclé and Maria Veneranda Laclé, who went on to marry successful brothers Eloy Arends and Maximilian Arends, respectively. Their houses are still standing; Eloy and Maria Monica's mansion

used to host civil marriages, while Maximilian and Maria Veneranda's house stands on the opposite side of the road to them—though currently under renovation after years left in ruin. □

Source: De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba) by Evert Bongers.

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The



highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □

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Today is going to be a good day

(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls



The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the

park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.arubanationalpark.org

Philip's Animal Garden



To stay with the animals, let's hop to an amazing place. Something different to do, an experience that is to be enjoyed by people of all ages. Welcome to Philip's Animal Garden. We are not talking about a zoo here, this is actually a sanctuary for all types of creatures, from horses to peacocks, kangaroos to turtles, monkeys, goats, and many, many more different species. The place was founded in 2009 and it is the only organization rescuing and rehabilitating exotic animals in Aruba, which has resulted in an amazing collection of these animals. They provide a suitable living environment for all the rescued animals. Up until now the owner, Philip, has built this shelter with his own efforts; building all the cages from scratch, designing all structures and welding them with his own bare hands. His goal is to upgrade the facilities to a world-class animal shelter with veterinary care and round-the-clock staffs. With the input from the Aruban community and visitors they provide the best care for these animals. Please check out their website for more information: www.philipsanimalgarden.com.

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as

a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.

Take an "off-road" sightseeing tour

A must-do activity on the island is for sure taking an off-road sightseeing tour. If you have a rented car, you can drive through the north-eastern side of Aruba and explore



the natural pools, caves, rock formations and gorgeous view of the Atlantic Ocean. To access most of these sights, like the natural pool (Conchi) and the Guadirikiri and Fontein caves, you must enter through the Arikok National Park and buy a day pass. Then you drive up the rugged road that leads you through the white dunes, caves and along the wind turbines. Other locations, like the Ayo and Casibari Rock formation are situated more in the center of the island, and are free for guests, 24 hours a day.

Go for a shopping spree in the city center



Need a new bathing suit? Head to the city center of Oranjestad, where there is countless of different stores—both high end and more affordable—that can offer you the service you deserve! Local shopping stores often offer a more affordable price, and have a variety of clothes, shoes, bathing suites, purses and more. Along the Royal Plaza strip, there are numerous jewelry stores with great quality jewelry. In the Renaissance mall, you can shop high-end luxury brands, like Dolce & Gabbana, Kate Spade, Louis Vuitton and more.

Around the high-rise hotel area near Palm Beach, the Paseo Herencia Mall contain a variety of shopping stores, restaurants, small food stands and even a movie theater! □

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The Lionfish And its threat to our marine wild life



(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become a danger to our local fish and reefs.

Originating from the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the lionfish is a relatively small fish. It has no teeth, but it does

protect itself against predators using its sharp, colorful spikes. It is said that the sting of a lionfish can be up to 100 times more painful than that of a bee's sting.

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a

major problem for our local marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba foundation, every reef has a "cleaning station"—tiny fish that eat algae and other types of waste on a reef, thus maintaining the reef's health and providing food to the fish population in the area. However, as the lionfish feeds off of these tiny fish, it becomes harder for the coral reef to maintain its health.

Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of these fish in the Atlan-



tic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba, lionfish were discovered in 2009.

Controlling the lionfish population is challenge, as each female fish can lay up to 40,000 eggs a day. Luckily, we have people like van Brakel who dedicate their

lives hunting and capturing these invasive species, using them for consumption and jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object resembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance. These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. Van Brakel not only catches them himself, but also cooks them for locals and tourists at The LionFish Snack Aruba in Paradera. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life. □



Aruba to me

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Did you know about...?

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin



(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is proud to officially introduce a new segment called **Did you know about...?**, where we dive into some (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this first edition, we look back at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamentu we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is placa. Cents are called cen (pronounced: seng), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called Dos placa; 10-cent coins were called debchi; 25-cent coins were called diez

placa and the 50-cent coin was once called Yotin (pronounced: jo-teen). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called placa too. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills

were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However,



er, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that were the first to set foot on the island.

Current design and symbolism 10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a Turtuga blanco (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, a coral motif, and the symbols of Cas Floria (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called Shoshoro. The birds Trupiaal, Shoco, rock drawings, and the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also a Purun di ceramica (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the Cododo (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), Cangreu di tera (land crab), Willem III Tower, and again the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called Banana di rif. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the Yuwana (Iguana), Aloe, Toteki (lizard), the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the Baile di cinta (folkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the Dornasol and the Warawara—both local birds, along with the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, the Tuna cactus plant, and the Caha di orgel (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

the word "florin" supposedly is named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word "florino", both explanations related to historical Italian currencies.□

Source: Placa, placa, placa by the National Library of Aruba

The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history



(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company

Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a



local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used

primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short lifespan: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Sources: Etnia Nativa & goldminer-anch.com.



(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his ca-

reer became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box,

the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingling box."

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Hay sites
- 6 Stylist's spot
- 11 "Cats" poet
- 12 Banish
- 13 Film category
- 14 African grassland
- 15 Tooth layer
- 17 Gadot of "Wonder Woman"
- 19 Impair
- 20 Diet no-no
- 23 Out of bed
- 25 Trig function
- 26 They say they're free, in life
- 28 Yard units
- 29 Flip
- 30 Snaky shape
- 31 Cove
- 32 Stew sphere
- 33 Bill collector, of a sort
- 35 November birthstone
- 38 Heap of fiction
- 41 Not dozing
- 42 Simpleton
- 43 Floppy cap
- 44 Door sign

DOWN

- 1 Relay section
- 2 Corrida cry
- 3 Small distinctions
- 4 Tattered
- 5 Clambake clam
- 6 Cut off
- 7 Skating jump
- 8 Rap's — Nas X
- 9 Outdated
- 10 Pay stub line
- 16 Snare
- 17 Social blunder
- 18 Spring sign

S	P	E	A	R		Y	A	N	K
P	O	P	P	A		M	E	L	O
A	L	I	E	N		E	A	G	L
C	A	T	S		K	A	R	A	T
E	R	A		P	I	C		E	E
R	I	P	P	E	D	U	P		
	S	H	A	D		L	I	A	R
		Z	I	P	P	E	D	U	P
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D	E	C	O	R		M	A	R	I
E	R	A	S	E		E	L	A	N
S	A	N	E			H	E	L	G

Yesterday's answer

- 20 Contract details
- 21 Trig topic
- 22 Physicist Nikola
- 24 Ready to go
- 25 Pop's daughter
- 27 Hit song of 1968
- 31 "Carmen" composer
- 33 Confiscate
- 34 Give — for one's money
- 35 Bar bill
- 36 Need to pay
- 37 Golf goal
- 39 Hole in one
- 40 That woman

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
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26						27			
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35	36	37				38		39	40
41						42			
43						44			

11-30

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

RGBX IBAIUBF ZLKB HAK DAC

LXP ZKD HAK DAC, JGBD ZLX

FJKLEMGBX ACJ DACK FACU.

— ULXMFJAX GCMGBF

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HOME ISN'T WHERE YOU'RE FROM; IT'S WHERE YOU FIND LIGHT WHEN ALL GROWS DARK. — PIERCE BROWN

Cruise ship Schedule: November 22 - 30 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
FRI	22	OCEANIA INSIGNIA	07.00	13.00	C	1
SAT	23	ROYAL CLIPPER	10.00	18.00	B	1
		AIDAPERLA	09.00	22.00	C	1
SUN	24	JEWEL OF THE SEAS	07.00	17.00	C	1
		EURODAM	08.00	17.00	B	1
		FREEWINDS - DEPT.	****	22.15	E	-
TUE	26	CELEBRITY REFLECTION	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
		WIND STAR	06.00	15.00	G	1
		MSC DIVINA	08.00	22.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
WED	27	SEVEN SEAS GRANDEUR	10.00	22.00	I	1
		OCEANIA INSIGNIA	07.00	16.00	B	1
		EMERALD PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
SAT	30	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS	16.30	****	C	1
		CORAL PRINCESS	08.00	17.00	B	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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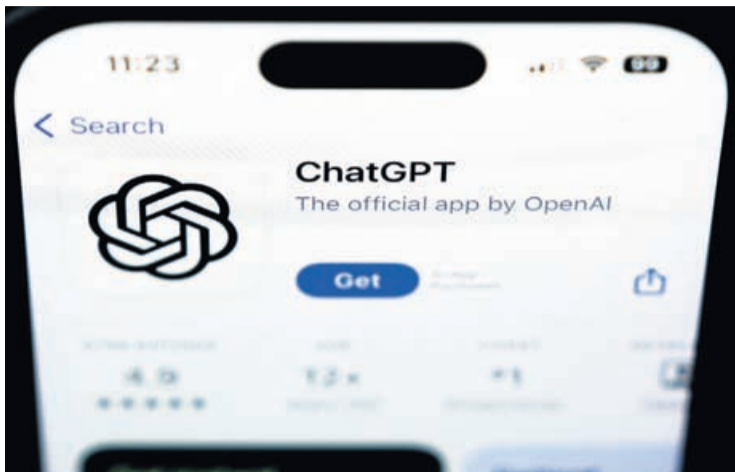
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24/7

Canadian news publishers sue OpenAI over alleged copyright infringement



A ChapGPT logo is seen in West Chester, Pa., on Dec. 6, 2023. Associated Press.

Associated Press
OTTAWA, Ontario (AP) — A coalition of Canadian news publishers, including The Canadian Press, Torstar, Globe and Mail, Postmedia and CBC/Radio-Canada, has filed a lawsuit against OpenAI for using news content to train its ChatGPT generative artificial intelligence system. The outlets said in a joint statement on Friday that OpenAI regularly breaches copyright by scraping large amounts of content

from Canadian media. "OpenAI is capitalizing and profiting from the use of this content, without getting permission or compensating content owners," the statement said. The publishers argue that OpenAI practices undermine the hundreds of millions of dollars invested in journalism, and that content is protected by copyright. "News media companies welcome technological innovations. However, all

participants must follow the law, and any use of intellectual property must be on fair terms," the statement said.

Generative AI can create text, images, videos and computer code based on a simple prompt, but the systems must first study vast amounts of existing content.

OpenAI said in a statement that its models are trained on publicly available data. It said they are "grounded in fair use and related international copyright principles that are fair for creators and support innovation."

The company said it collaborates "closely with news publishers, including in the display, attribution and links to their content in ChatGPT search" and offers outlets "easy ways to opt-out should they so desire."

This is the first such case in

Canada, though numerous lawsuits are underway in the United States, including a case by the New York Times against OpenAI and Microsoft.

Some news organizations have chosen to collaborate rather than fight with OpenAI by signing deals to get compensated for sharing news content that can be used to train its AI systems. □



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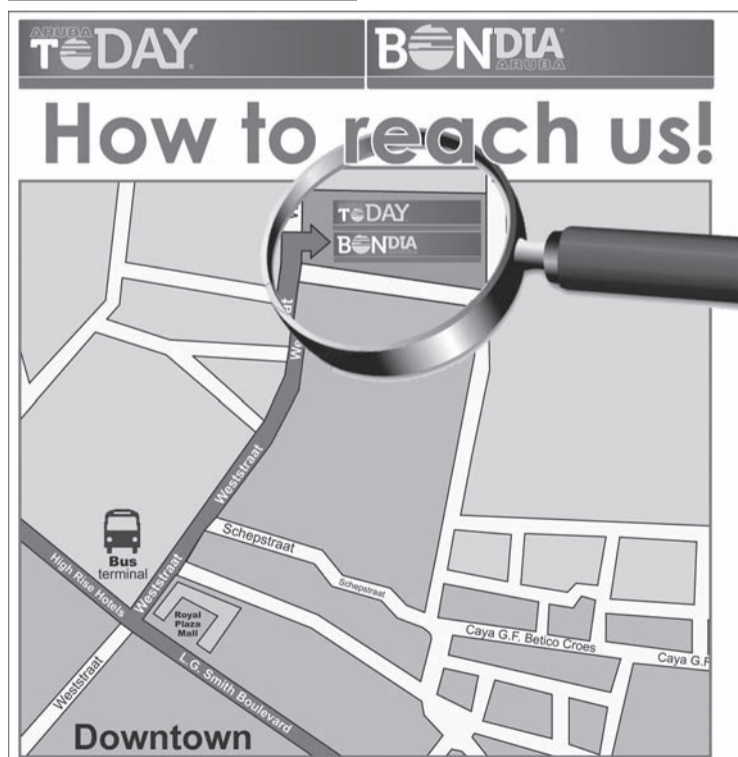
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The world gets its first glimpse inside Notre Dame Cathedral after 5 years under wraps

By THOMAS ADAMSON
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Five years after a catastrophic fire reduced Notre Dame Cathedral to a smoldering shell, journalists got a first glimpse of the Gothic masterpiece's fully restored interiors during a visit with French President Emmanuel Macron. The transformation is nothing short of breathtaking: light dances across brilliant stone, gilded accents gleam anew, and the iconic monument's majesty is reborn. From Dec. 8, visitors will once again marvel at the cathedral's blend of history and craftsmanship. Here's a reporter's-eye view:

Nave: brilliant stone

The nave, once darkened by soot and rubble, now radiates a celestial brilliance. Visitors can see the true color of the cathedral's walls: a pale Lutetian limestone named after the Roman word for Paris, Lutecia that glows under sunlight streaming through restored stained-glass windows. The newfound blond hues highlight the soaring Gothic columns and ribbed vaults, creating a bright and uplifting atmosphere. Restorers say it's the first time in centuries the true stone has been exposed in this way. The polished checkerboard marble floor, glistening underfoot, is so smooth it seems you could glide across it communicating with the gilded, golden grille partition of the choir area.

Overhead, incandescent chandeliers hang majestically from each vaulted arch, stretching from west to east, casting a warm, golden light throughout the nave.

The meticulous restoration process involved cleaning over 42,000 square meters of stone — an area equivalent to roughly six soccer fields using innovative latex peels to strip away centuries of grime without causing damage. Conservators uncovered mason marks etched by medieval builders intimate traces of the



People stroll in Notre-Dame de Paris cathedral while French President Emmanuel Macron visits the restored interiors the monument, Friday, Nov.29, 2024 in Paris.

artisans who shaped Notre Dame in the 12th and 13th centuries.

This gleaming transformation is a stark contrast to the wreckage of 2019, when the nave was strewn with charred debris.

Altar: blaze fused into Christ's hand

The altar in the cathedral's chancel carries a poignant symbol of the fire's devastation. Nicolas Coustou's Pietà, part of the Vœu de Louis XIII ensemble, survived largely unscathed, but molten lead from the blaze fused into the hand of Christ. Restorers chose to preserve this as a subtle, yet powerful, reminder of

the tragedy.

Surrounding the altar, the intricate marquetry floor, long hidden under layers of dirt, has been pieced together from fragments recovered after the fire.

Nearby, the polished Cross of Glory, which famously literally glowed amid the flames, now stands restored to its full brilliance. Framed by the radiant blonde stonework of the nave, the cross serves as a centerpiece of the cathedral's rebirth.

Organ: A complex revival

The grand organ, among the largest and most storied in France, has undergone an intricate revival.

Spared from the flames but coated in lead dust, its 8,000 pipes, ranging in size from that of a pen to over 10 meters (33 feet) tall, were painstakingly disassembled, cleaned, and retuned. Over two years, this work was performed with precision in the cathedral's silent, cavernous interior, where harmonization was achieved entirely by ear. Now, the organ's grandeur is unmistakable. Its towering wooden case, marked with carvings left by past craftsmen, gleams under sunlight streaming through restored clerestory windows. Even in silence, it commands awe.

Chapels: murals rediscovered

The 29 chapels circling the nave and choir burst with color and detail previously dulled by dirt and neglect. Restorers revealed intricate murals, gilded stars on ceilings, and vibrant motifs originally created under Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's direction. Each chapel tells a unique story through its designs and themes.

The Chapel of Saint Marcel stands out as a masterpiece, its mural of the saint's relics vividly restored. Visitors are captivated by its radiant colors, producing an effect likened to the Sistine Chapel in Rome — a visual firework display. In other chapels, traces of 19th-century painters' color tests, hidden in nooks, provide glimpses into their artistic process.

Transept crossing: rebuilding under pressure

The transept crossing, where the original spire collapsed, presented one of the restoration's most formidable challenges. Above, soaring new vaults of Lutetian limestone replicate the medieval originals with remarkable precision. Beneath the crossing, archaeologists uncovered a trove of history: fragments of Notre Dame's medieval jubé, or choir screen, buried in the rubble. These intricately carved stones, some still bearing faint traces of polychrome paint, provide a rare glimpse into the cathedral's vibrant 13th-century decorative history. □



Construction workers who took part to the Notre-Dame cathedral restoration visit the cathedral after French President Emmanuel Macron's visit of the restored interiors, Friday, Nov.29, 2024 in Paris.



A hole is seen in the dome inside Notre Dame cathedral after the fire in Paris, Tuesday, April 16, 2019.

Associated Press.

Seahawks' Geno Smith returns to face Jets for the 1st time at MetLife Stadium as an opposing starter

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.
AP Pro Football Writer
EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)

— Geno Smith was once considered a major part of the New York Jets' future, a potential franchise quarterback with a big smile and an even bigger arm.

Inconsistency, struggles and a well-publicized locker room altercation eventually led to him being a disappointing piece of the team's past.

On Sunday, Smith will face the franchise that drafted him in the second round with the 39th overall pick in 2013 out of West Virginia for the second time as an opposing starter with the Seattle Seahawks (6-5) and first at MetLife Stadium, his first NFL home.

"It's the biggest game of the year because it's the next game," insisted Smith, who beat the Jets in 2022 in Seattle. "But obviously because I was drafted there, it's going to be a narrative that's built."

Smith, who also beat the Giants last year at MetLife Stadium, played for the Jets for parts of four seasons. He started his first two years, showing flashes of the playmaking ability that made him a college star.

But the quarterback's jaw was broken by linebacker IK Enemkpali in a fight in the locker room during training camp in 2015. Ryan Fitzpatrick took over as the starter and Smith started just one more game for the Jets, finishing with 28 touchdown passes and 36 interceptions in 33 games, including 30 starts.

"I've always had tremendous love and respect for that organization," said Smith, now 34. "Obviously, the team that drafted me, gave me a chance out of the gate. A lot of great people there. Some people that I was there with, a lot of those people are now gone."

"So as far as the whole revenge thing, that's not on my mind."

After his failed stint with the Jets, Smith's football jour-



Seattle Seahawks quarterback Geno Smith speaks at a news conference after an NFL football game against the San Francisco 49ers in Santa Clara, Calif., Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024.

Associated Press.

ney led him to the Giants for one year and the Chargers for another. In 2019, he signed with Seattle, served as Russell Wilson's backup the next few seasons and filled in as the starter for three games in 2021. After Wilson was traded to Denver during the 2022 offseason, Smith beat out Drew Lock for the starting job. And he thrived.

Smith won the AP NFL Comeback Player of the Year in his first season with the Seahawks, got a three-year contract and has made the Pro Bowl each of the last two years. He has thrown 62 touchdown passes over the last three seasons, establishing himself as one of the NFL's top playmaking quarterbacks. While Smith's 12 interceptions lead the league this year, that hasn't diminished the respect he has earned around the league.

"Yeah, tremendous respect for Geno and what he's done because that's not the typical story in this league," Jets interim coach Jeff Ulbrich said. "Guys, when they fail or face real adversity and they don't get it done at their initial stop, a lot of times that's it and their career's over with and they don't become the players that they



New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers (8) tries to avoid a sack from Indianapolis Colts defensive end Kwity Paye (51) during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game, Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press.

should've or could've become.

"He's a guy that's, absolutely, he's started over in Seattle and he's revived his career in so many ways and it's really cool to see. A testament to the resolve that he has."

Rodgers ready to roll
Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers, who turns 41 on Monday, has dealt with knee, hamstring and ankle injuries for most of the season while not playing up to the level he expects.

But after resting during the Jets' bye-week break, Rodgers was not listed on the team's injury report for the first time since Week 4. Ulbrich said Rodgers will start

the final six regular-season games as long as the QB remains healthy.

"I'm going to enjoy them," Rodgers said. "Obviously, the future is unknown for a lot of us, but yeah, I have a lot of pride in this game when I take the field, when I go to practice. So I'll be excited about being out there with the guys and finish off strong."

Jets shakeup
The game marks the first for New York since owner Woody Johnson fired general manager Joe Douglas on Nov. 19.

That came six weeks after coach Robert Saleh was dismissed.

The Jets (3-8) have al-

ready begun the process of searching for a new GM for a team that has lost seven of its last eight and is close to extending its play-off drought to 14 years.

"In the end, it comes down to guys being motivated individually and then just wanting to play for something bigger than themselves," Rodgers said, "and hope we all do that."

Big-play Bryant
Seahawks safety Coby Bryant was selected the NFC's defensive player of the week for the first time after scoring on a 69-yard pick-6 last Sunday against Arizona.

Bryant, who shifted to safety this year after starting his pro career as a cornerback, took over as the starter after Rawshawn Jenkins went down earlier this season with an injury.

Bryant has 39 tackles and two interceptions and dedicated the ball from the pick-6 to his mother, who celebrated her birthday on the day of her son's big play.

"Definitely a blessing," Bryant said. "It just shows that I'm willing to work, put my head down and control what I can control, and just go out there and dominate."

Big Cat's back
Seahawks defensive end Leonard Williams will also return "home" Sunday.

Williams is playing in New York for the first time since he was traded to Seattle last October from the Giants. Williams was drafted by the Jets in the first round in 2015 and spent 4½ seasons there before being traded across town midway through the 2019 season.

Like Smith, Williams said too much time has passed for it to feel like "a revenge game or homecoming game" for him.

"It feels like just a regular game to me," said Williams, who had 2½ sacks, four quarterback hits, three tackles for loss and a pass defensed last week against Arizona. □

Leicester hires Van Nistelrooy as manager after his impressive interim spell at Man United

By **STEVE DOUGLAS**

AP Sports Writer

Leicester hired Ruud van Nistelrooy as its manager on Friday following his impressive spell as interim coach at former club Manchester United that included two wins over his new team.

The 48-year-old Van Nistelrooy joined on a deal until June 2027 and will take over a team in fifth-to-last place in the English Premier League after promotion last season.

Van Nistelrooy, a former Netherlands striker who played club soccer for Man United and Real Madrid, joined United's coaching staff in July as an assistant to compatriot Erik ten Hag. After Ten Hag was fired last month, Van Nistelrooy took



Leicester's head coach Steve Cooper gestures during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester City and Chelsea at King Power stadium in Leicester, England, Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024. Associated Press.

charge on an interim basis and had three wins and a draw in his four games at the helm before Ruben Amorim was hired as Ten Hag's full-time replacement. Among those victories was a 5-2 thrashing of a weakened Leicester team in the English League Cup and a 3-0 win over the Foxes in the Premier League.

"I'm proud, I'm excited. Everybody that I speak to about Leicester is enthusiastic," Van Nistelrooy said. This will be Van Nistelrooy's second senior full-time managerial role, having led PSV Eindhoven for almost a season and winning the Dutch Cup before quitting near the end of the 2022-23 campaign. □

Jalen Brunson pours in 31 points as Knicks hold on to beat the Hornets 99-98 in NBA Cup play

By **CAL REED**

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Jalen Brunson had 31 points

and made two clutch free throws with 8.6 seconds left, and the New York Knicks held on to beat the short-

handed Charlotte Hornets 99-98 to improve to 3-0 in NBA Cup play on Friday. Karl-Anthony Towns added

19 points and 12 rebounds for the Knicks, who entered the game 23 points behind the Orlando Magic in point differential in Group A and in need of a blowout win. The Magic are 2-0 in group play and visit Brooklyn on Friday night.

Brandon Miller had 20 points and Josh Green added 15 points for the Hornets, who played without three starters, including the red-hot LaMelo Ball, Miles Bridges and Mark Williams, as well as key reserves Nick Richards, Tre Mann and Grant Williams.

The Knicks committed eight turnovers in the first quarter and were held to 15 points. Takeaways

Knicks: New York played sloppy and uninspired basketball in the first half. The Knicks took the lead in the last minute, but it was short-lived as Josh Green hit a jumper to take the lead back, then proceeded to steal a lazy inbound pass from Mikal Bridges and turn around to hit a fading jumper as time expired. □



New York Knicks guard Jalen Brunson (11) battles Charlotte Hornets forward Cody Martin for a loose ball during the first half of an Emirates NBA Cup basketball game in Charlotte, N.C., Friday, Nov. 29, 2024. Associated Press.

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